



PRESS RELEASE

Massachusetts Students Lead Nation in Advanced Placement Success for Fourth Year

Commonwealth had highest percentage of graduating class scoring a 3 or higher on an AP exam

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MALDEN — For the fourth year in a row, Massachusetts is the top state in the nation for the percentage of the graduating class that scored a 3 or higher on an Advanced Placement exam. According to results released by the College Board today, for the first time, one out of every three members of the class of 2019 in Massachusetts graduated with a score of 3 or higher on an AP test. The Commonwealth also had the highest 10-year percentage growth of graduates who scored a 3 or higher.

That accomplishment reflects both strong participation – 47.9 percent of Massachusetts' class of 2019 took at least one AP exam while they were in high school – and frequent success, with 33.8 percent of the overall class of 2019 scoring 3 or higher out of a possible 5 on an AP exam. Both figures were increases over the class of 2018.

“Our administration is proud that Massachusetts once again leads the nation in AP testing scores,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.**

“Congratulations to all the students and teachers for their dedication and hard work, whether it is through Advanced Placement classes or other college-level courses that help prepare them for success in the classroom and beyond.”

“We are grateful to the students and teachers throughout the Commonwealth who have committed to continued achievement in

classrooms across the state,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. “Despite this success, our administration recognizes there is still more work to do to close opportunity gaps, and we are focused on providing college-level opportunities for all students throughout Massachusetts.”

Participation in AP exams by members of the class of 2019 rose by 1.3 percent compared to the prior year, and the number of graduates who scored a 3 or higher rose by 3 percent. A score of 3 or above on an AP exam indicates that a student is capable of doing the work for an introductory college-level course in that subject area, according to the College Board.

Massachusetts is considering ways to further reduce the AP exam fee for some additional low-income students for whom it is an obstacle. Currently, the state covers part of the exam cost for students in districts that are designated in need of assistance under the state accountability system, and a separate state grant to Mass Insight Education and Research helps defray the cost at schools where Mass Insight supports the AP program. In addition, districts can also use some of their funds to help cover student costs.

“Advanced Placement courses are a great way for students to learn and practice the level of scholarship that will help them in college,” **said Education Secretary James Peyser**. “Advanced Placement courses give students the opportunity to earn college credits, stand out in college admissions, and build critical thinking skills. It is very important that we encourage these opportunities for all students in the Commonwealth.”

“This year’s results would not be possible without the dedication of teachers, students, and the families who support them,” **said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley**. “I’m grateful to everyone who has helped, including our partner, Mass Insight, and I look forward to working together to address opportunity gaps and see even more students succeed in AP classes.”

Advanced Placement teachers in Massachusetts include 2020 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Takeru Nagayoshi, who teaches AP English classes at New Bedford High School. He has also led Saturday sessions for students at schools that Mass Insight supports.

“Our state is taking access to AP work seriously, with an added emphasis on supporting students from underserved backgrounds,” **said Mr. Nagayoshi**. “While we have a long way to go, I’m proud to represent a state and work alongside an organization that commits to advanced academic access for all its students.”

Hispanic, Latino and Black students saw increases in both their participation and performance. In 2009, Hispanic and Latino high school graduates took 2,136 AP exams, and in 2019, they took 11,384 (which was an increase over the class of 2018’s 10,068 exams). In 2009, Hispanic and Latino high school graduates received scores of 3 or higher on 1,082 exams, and in 2019, they scored 3 or higher on 5,613 exams (which was also an increase over the class of 2018’s 4,734 exams).

Black students also made gains. In 2009, Black high school graduates took 1,534 AP exams, while in 2019, they took 5,411 (which was also an increase over the class of 2018’s 4,761 exams). In 2009, Black high school graduates received scores of 3 or higher on 468 exams, and in 2019, they scored 3 or higher on 1,816 exams (which was also an increase over the class of 2018’s 1,620 exams).

Low-income students in Massachusetts’ class of 2019 also saw improvements compared to 10 years ago. In 2009, low-income high school graduates took 5,578 AP exams, while in 2019, they took 22,906 (which was also an increase over the class of 2018’s 21,905 exams). In 2009, low-income high school graduates received scores of 3 or higher on 2,464 exams, and in 2019, they scored 3 or higher on 10,933 exams (which was an increase compared to the class of 2018’s 9,881 exams).

Results for individual schools’ class of 2019 are not available through DESE, but AP results for 2017-18 that include all high school students are online at <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/ap.aspx>

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__mass.us14.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Dd8f37d1a90dacd97f207f0b4a-26id-3Dabf7995e4c-26e-3D1358b0

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While Massachusetts' students rank first in the nation on many educational measures, the Executive Office of Education strives to strengthen the foundations of education reform, empower schools and educators, and develop pathways to college and careers so all students in the Commonwealth can succeed, regardless of their zip code.

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